

GOP's McCarthy opposes Jan. 6 panel; McConnell hits 'pause'

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy said Tuesday that he won't support a proposal to form an independent, bipartisan commission to study the deadly Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, almost certainly eroding GOP support ahead of a vote and positioning his party as opposed to investigations of the attack.

McCarthy said he wanted the new panel to look beyond the violent uprising by supporters loyal to Donald Trump, who were trying to stop the certification of President Joe Biden's election. McCarthy and other Republicans — including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell — have pushed to have the new commission also investi-

gate other violent acts, including protests last summer in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd. Calling the commission "duplicative and potentially counterproductive," McCarthy said that given the "shortsighted scope that does not examine interrelated forms of political violence in America, I cannot support this legislation."

McCarthy's opposition all but ensures this week's vote on the bipartisan bill to form the panel will have less Republican support in the House, and dims its chances in the evenly divided Senate — threatening the commission's chances as Democrats say it is essential to reckoning with the violent attack that interrupted electoral count.

Continued on next page



House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Calif., speaks to reporters outside the White House after a meeting with President Joe Biden, Wednesday, May 12, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Continued from Front

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called McCarthy's opposition "cowardice" and said he doesn't want to find the truth. She released a February letter from the GOP leader in which he asked for an even split of Democrats and Republican commissioners, equal subpoena power and no predetermined findings or conclusions listed in the legislation. The bipartisan legislation accommodates all three of those requests, she said.

"Leader McCarthy won't take yes for an answer," she said. "The American people expect and deserve the truth about what happened on January 6th in a manner that strengthens our democracy and ensures that January 6th never happens again."

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer vowed to bring the House measure for a vote, forcing Republicans to choose. "Republicans can let their constituents know: Are they on the side for truth or are they going to cover up?" Schumer said. But the Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell said he's "pushing the pause button," taking a look at the proposal and a related bill to beef up Capitol security.

Ahead of the House vote, which could come as soon as Wednesday, the Biden administration said it supports the legislation and that the American people deserve "such a full and fair accounting to prevent future violence and strengthen the security and resilience of our democratic institutions."

Modeled after the investigation into the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the bill would establish an independent 10-member commission that would make recommendations for preventing another insurrection. The panel would have to issue



In this March 8, 2021, file photo, members of the National Guard open a gate in the razor wire topped perimeter fence around the Capitol at sunrise in Washington.

Associated Press

a final report by Dec. 31. The GOP leader's dissent comes as some other Republicans have started to downplay the severity of the attack, further aligning themselves with Trump who had encouraged his supporters to head to Capitol Hill that day to fight for his presidency. Numerous Republican lawmakers joined McCarthy in speaking against the measure early Tuesday during a meeting of House Republicans, according to one Republican familiar with the private session and granted anonymity to discuss it.

Rep. John Katko, the top Republican on the Homeland Security Committee, who drafted the legislation with the panel's Democratic Chairman Rep. Bennie Thompson of Mississippi, defended the proposed commission at the closed-door meeting Tuesday, the person said.

"I recognize there are differing views on this issue, which is an inherent part of the legislative process and not something I take personally," Katko, R-N.Y., said in a statement. "However, as the Republican Leader of the Homeland Security Committee, I feel a deep obligation to get the answers U.S. Capitol Police and Americans deserve and ensure an attack on the heart of our democracy never happens again." The bill's path forward is uncertain in the 50-50 Senate, where some Republicans have said they don't think it's needed. Democrats would need at least 10 Republican senators to pass it. McConnell objected to the initial proposal by Pelosi, saying it should be bipartisan and also investigate last summer's riots, but said Tuesday that Senate Republicans are "undecided." Missouri Sen. Roy Blunt, the

top Republican on the Senate Rules Committee, has said he doesn't think a commission is necessary because it wouldn't work fast enough to make changes. Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said Tuesday that he thinks a commission would be "worthwhile" but that there shouldn't be limits on the time period investigated. Schumer questioned why Republicans even negotiate with Democrats "if the Republican leaders are just going to throw their lead negotiators under the bus." The House bill does not set specific limits on the commission but calls for "the facts and causes relating to the January 6, 2021, domestic terrorist attack upon the United States Capitol Complex and relating to the interference with the peaceful transfer of power, including facts and causes relating to the preparedness and response of the United States Capitol Police and other Federal, State, and local law enforcement," along with the "the influencing factors that fomented such attack on American representative democracy while engaged in a constitutional process." The legislation

does not mention Trump and language included in Pelosi's first draft that mentioned white supremacy was removed in the final compromise bill.

Some Senate Republicans have signaled that they would support the commission. Utah Sen. Mitt Romney said that given the violent attack, "we should understand what mistakes were made and how we could prevent them from happening again in the future." Romney said the riots in the wake of Floyd's death were "of a different nature" and "the key thing that needs to be associated with this effort is the attack on this building."

In the House, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said he still expects a "significant number" of Republicans to vote for the bill, which will be considered alongside separate legislation to pay for security improvements. But some in the GOP have shied away from discussing the facts of the attack.

At a House hearing last week investigating the siege, one member denied there was an insurrection at all while another said a woman who was shot and killed by police while trying to break into the House chamber was "executed." Many other Republicans have tried to change the subject, saying Democrats should focus on the violence in cities instead.

McCarthy's opposition also comes as some have suggested that he could be subpoenaed by the panel because he talked to Trump as the insurrection was happening. Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, who was booted out of GOP leadership last week for her criticism of Trump's lies about the election being stolen, suggested as much in an interview with ABC News, saying she "wouldn't be surprised" if McCarthy was investigated as part of the probe. Cheney has supported the commission.

Cheney and Katko are two of 10 Republicans who voted to impeach Trump after the insurrection for telling his supporters that day to "fight like hell" to overturn his defeat. The Senate later acquitted him. □



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Congress OKs bill to fight hate crimes vs. Asian Americans

By BRIAN SLODYSKO

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress approved legislation Tuesday intended to curtail a striking rise in hate crimes against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, sending President Joe Biden a bipartisan denunciation of the spate of brutal attacks that have proliferated during coronavirus pandemic. The bill, which the House passed on a 364-62 vote, will expedite the review of hate crimes at the Justice Department and make grants available to help local law enforcement agencies improve their investigation, identification and reporting of incidents driven by bias, which often go underreported. It previously passed the Senate 94-1 in April after lawmakers reached a compromise. Biden has said he will sign it. "Asian Americans have been screaming out for help, and the House and Senate and President Biden have clearly heard our pleas," said Rep. Grace Meng, D-N.Y., who helped lead efforts to pass the bill in the House.

To many Asian Americans, the pandemic has invigorated deep-seated biases that in some cases date back to the Chinese Exclusion Act of more than a century ago. President Donald Trump repeatedly referred to the virus, which emerged in Wuhan, China,



House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of Calif., listens during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, May 18, 2021, on the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act.

Associated Press

as the "China Virus" or the "Kung Flu." And as cases of the illness began to rise in the U.S., so too did the attacks, with thousands of violent incidents reported in the past year.

Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., said it's painful for many to "open up the newspaper everyday and see that yet another Asian American has been assaulted, attacked and even killed." In February, an 84-year-old man died after he was pushed to the ground near his home in San Francisco. A young family was injured in a Texas grocery store attack last year. And in Georgia, six Asian women were

killed in March during a series of shootings targeting workers at massage parlors. Prosecutors are seeking hate crimes charges. The women who were killed are mentioned in the text of the bill.

"You start to think, 'Well, will I be next?'" Chu said. Yet to some activists, including organizations representing gay and transgender Asian Americans, the legislation is misguided. More than 100 groups have signed onto a statement opposing the bill for relying too heavily on law enforcement while providing too little funding to address the underlying issues driving a

rise in hate crimes.

"We have had hate crimes laws since 1968, it's been expanded over and over again, and this new legislation is more of the same," said Jason Wu, who is co-chair of GAPIMNY-Empowering Queer & Trans Asian Pacific Islanders. "These issues are about bias, but also rooted in inequality, and lack of investment and resources for our communities. Not a shortage of police and jails."

Meng acknowledged some of the concerns raised by the groups, but countered that the widespread underreporting of hate crimes needs to be

addressed.

"Law enforcement is currently underreporting these kinds of incidents and it makes it easy to ignore hate crimes all together," she said.

Rep. Jim Jordan, an Ohio Republican, suggested that the surge in Asian American violence was tied to efforts backed by some Democrats and other progressives to decrease funding for the police.

"This violence, by and large, is happening in Democrat-controlled cities," said Jordan. If "money wasn't taken from police and they were allowed to do their jobs, we would probably be in an entirely different position."

Yet the bill also represented a rare moment of bipartisanship in a Congress that has struggled to overcome partisan gridlock, while underscoring an evolution in Republican thought on hate crimes legislation.

Many conservatives have historically dismissed hate crimes laws, arguing they create special protected classes so that victims of similar crimes are treated differently.

"I'm glad Congress is coming together in a bipartisan way," said Rep. Young Kim, a California Republican who is Korean American. "Let's also recognize that we cannot legislate hate out of our people's hearts and minds." □

Amazon to extend pause on police use of facial recognition

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon said Tuesday that it will extend its ban on police use of its face-recognition technology beyond the one-year pause it announced last year.

Amazon and other technology companies have been under pressure from civil rights activists and their own workers to halt the sale of face-recognition systems to law enforcement agencies. One concern is that the technology can incorrectly identify people with darker skin, which Amazon has denied.

At least seven states al-

ready have enacted restrictions limiting government use of the technology and several others are debating bills.

Last June, Amazon announced it would pause police use of its facial-recognition technology, a move coming at a time of nationwide protests and a renewed focus on racial injustice in the U.S. after the killing of George Floyd, a Black man who died after a white police officer pressed his knee against his neck. Microsoft and IBM also paused sales of their software to police around the

same time last year, though most police departments look to lesser-known firms for the technology.

Seattle-based Amazon.com Inc. didn't say on Tuesday why its ban was extended or how long it would last.

The American Civil Liberties Union on Tuesday applauded Amazon for extending its moratorium. But it added that "the Biden administration and legislatures across the country must further protect communities from the dangers of this technology by ending its use by law enforcement entirely,



In this April 16, 2020, file photo, the Amazon logo is displayed in Douai, northern France.

Associated Press

regardless which company is selling it." □

Prosecutor says deputies justified in shooting of Black man

By **BEN FINLEY and JONATHAN DREW**

Associated Press

ELIZABETH CITY, N.C. (AP) —

A North Carolina prosecutor said Tuesday that sheriff's deputies were justified in fatally shooting Andrew Brown Jr. because he ignored their commands and endangered at least two of them when he drove his car toward them.

District Attorney Andrew Womble said at a news conference that Brown used his car as a "deadly weapon," causing Pasquotank County deputies to believe it was necessary to use deadly force. Womble, who acknowledged Brown wasn't armed with guns or other weapons, said the deputies will face no criminal charges.

Attorneys for Brown's family who watched body camera footage have previously said that he was trying to drive away from deputies and posed no threat. Family attorney Harry Daniels said that the family was preparing a response to Womble's announcement. During his news conference, Womble said a deputy who tried to open Brown's car door wound up partly on



Pasquotank County District Attorney Andrew Womble answers questions from reporters after announcing he will not charge deputies in the April 21 fatal shooting of Andrew Brown Jr. during a news conference Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at the Pasquotank County Public Safety building in Elizabeth City, N.C.

Associated Press

the hood as Brown backed up, and the deputy found himself directly in the car's path moments later when Brown drove forward. Womble said the deputy had to push off the car with his hand to narrowly avoid being run over, and at least one of the other deputies was also endangered as the group tried to

take Brown into custody on drug-related warrants.

"I find that the facts of this case clearly illustrate the officers who used deadly force on Andrew Brown Jr. did so reasonably and only when a violent felon used a deadly weapon to put their lives in danger," Womble said, referring to Brown's car. He added that

he found that "Brown's actions and conduct were indeed dangerous by the time of the shooting. ... Brown posed an immediate threat to the safety of the officers and others."

The sheriff has said his deputies weren't injured.

The prosecutor said he would not release body-camera video of the con-

frontation between Brown and the law enforcement officers, but he played portions of the video during the news conference that multiple news outlets broadcast live.

The shooting on April 21 sparked protests over multiple weeks by demonstrators calling for the public release of the body camera video. While authorities have shown footage to Brown's family, a judge refused to release the video publicly pending a probe by the State Bureau of Investigation. Womble made his determination to not charge any of the officers after reviewing the bureau's report.

The three deputies involved in the shooting — Investigator Daniel Meads, Deputy Robert Morgan and Cpl. Aaron Lewellyn — have been on leave since it happened. The sheriff's office said Morgan is Black, while Meads and Lewellyn are white.

A lawyer who represented the three deputies during a court hearing on petitions to release the video didn't immediately respond to an email seeking comment Tuesday. □

Andrew Giuliani, son of former mayor, to run for NY governor



In this April 28, 2021 file photo, Andrew Giuliani, son of former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, speaks to reporters outside the building where his father lives, in New York.

Associated Press

By **KAREN MATTHEWS**

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Andrew Giuliani, the son of former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, announced Tuesday he is seeking the Republican nomination for

governor of New York, potentially setting up a battle with third-term incumbent Democrat Andrew Cuomo. "Giuliani vs. Cuomo. Holy smokes. It's Muhammad Ali vs. Joe Frazier," the 35-year-old said in an interview with

the New York Post.

He also posted a video on Twitter that assailed Cuomo for, among other things, barring gatherings and closing businesses and schools as the coronavirus began killing thousands of New Yorkers last March.

"At the first sign of a problem, they chose to shut us down. They take away our freedoms. They quarantine healthy people," Giuliani said.

Giuliani served as a White House aide under former President Donald Trump and has more recently been a commentator for the conservative network Newsmax. He has never run for public office.

Andrew Giuliani first came to public attention at his father's 1994 mayoral inauguration when, at age 7, he

mimicked his father's gestures at the podium and repeated some of his words. The spotlight-stealing antics were lampooned by Chris Farley on "Saturday Night Live."

Giuliani was recruited for the golf team at Duke University but sued the university in 2008, saying he had been improperly cut from the team. Duke said the cut was based on bullying behavior, which Giuliani denied. The lawsuit was dismissed in 2010.

Giuliani was present last month when federal agents raided his father's Manhattan home as part of an investigation into the business dealings of the elder Giuliani during his time as Trump's personal lawyer. The younger Giuliani told reporters the raids on his

father's home and office were "disgusting" and "absolutely absurd."

To win the Republican nomination in 2022, he will have to get past two far more seasoned politicians already in the race: U.S. Rep. Lee Zeldin, a well-funded Trump standard-bearer on Long Island, and former Westchester County Executive Rob Astorino.

Astorino was the Republican nominee in 2014, losing to Cuomo by about 14 percentage points.

Zeldin received an endorsement Tuesday from Mike Pompeo, the former secretary of state under Trump and former Congress member from Kansas. Pompeo called Zeldin "a family man who will step up and defend New York against the radical left." □

US-Russia showdown looms as top diplomats meet in Iceland

BY MATTHEW LEE

AP Diplomatic Writer

REYKJAVIK, Iceland (AP)

— Top diplomats from the United States and Russia are set to square off this week in Iceland for their first face-to-face encounter that comes as ties between the nations have deteriorated sharply in recent months.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Russia's longtime Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov plan to talk Wednesday on the sidelines of an Arctic Council meeting in the Icelandic capital of Reykjavik, a city with deep history in U.S.-Russian relations.

Even before the talks — that are ostensibly to prepare for a summit between President Joe Biden and Russian leader Vladimir Putin next month — the two diplomats laid down near diametrically opposed positions for the meeting, previewing what is likely to be a difficult and contentious exchange.

This follows a spate of tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions as U.S.-Russian relations threaten a return to Cold War lows. The nuclear pow-



Icelandic Foreign Minister Gudlaugur Thor Thordarson, second right, sits opposite US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, second left, during a at the Harpa Concert Hall in Reykjavik, Iceland, Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

Associated Press

ers are at odds on myriad issues including Ukraine, the Arctic, Russia's treatment of opposition figure Alexey Navalny and accusations of cybermalfeasance, including claims that Russia-based hackers were responsible for a ransomware attack on a key U.S. pipeline.

"It would be our preference to have a more stable and more predictable relationship with Russia," Blinken said on Tuesday. "At the same time, we've been very clear that if Russia chooses to take reckless or aggressive actions that target our interests or those of our allies and partners,

we'll respond. Not for purposes of seeking conflict or escalating but because such challenges cannot be allowed to go forward with impunity."

Blinken also tweeted Tuesday U.S. condemnation of Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea from Ukraine. "We condemn Russia's abuses

in Crimea, especially on May 18 as we reflect on the 77th anniversary of Stalin's deportation of countless Crimean Tatars from their native peninsula," he posted.

Perhaps anticipating Blinken's position, Lavrov had offered a prebutter at a news conference Monday in Moscow.

"Apparently, a (U.S.) decision was made to promote stable, predictable relations with Russia," he said. "However, if this includes constant and predictable sanctions, that's not what we need. Our attitude toward the U.S. includes the hope that normalized relations will be based on specific actions rather than words of which we have heard too many."

Blinken said his meeting with Lavrov would be an important opportunity to test the proposition that the U.S. and Russia can work collaboratively on certain issues, like climate change, the Mideast, Iran and North Korea, despite bitter disagreements on others. The meeting comes as much of the world is focused on the Israel-Palestinian war. □

India scours sea after barge sinks, 2nd adrift after cyclone

By SHEIKH SAALIQ

NEW DELHI (AP)

— The Indian navy is working to rescue crew members from a sunken barge and a second cargo vessel that was adrift Tuesday off the coast of Mumbai after a deadly cyclone struck the western coast.

The navy said it has rescued 177 of the 400 people on the two barges in the Arabia Sea. Three warships, maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters joined the rescue operations and were scouring the sea, the navy said.

Both barges were working for Oil and Natural Gas Corp., the largest crude oil and natural gas company in India.

The company said the barges were carrying personnel deployed for offshore drilling and their anchors gave away during

the storm.

Cyclone Tauktae, the most powerful storm to hit the region in more than two decades, packed sustained winds of up to 210 kilometers (130 miles) per hour when it came ashore in Gujarat state late Monday. Four people were killed in the state, raising the storm's total to 16.

Residents emerged from relief shelters Tuesday to find debris strewn across roads, trees uprooted and electricity lines damaged. The coast guard rescued eight fishermen who were stranded at sea near Veraval, a fishing industry hub in Gujarat state.

In Maharashtra, six people were killed Monday but the state's capital, Mumbai, was largely spared from major damage even as heavy rains pounded the city's coastline and high

winds whipped its skyscrapers. Over the weekend, the cyclone killed six people in Kerala, Karnataka and Goa states as it moved along the western coast.

The cyclone has weakened, but the India Meteorological Department forecast heavy rainfall for many parts of Gujarat and Maharashtra in the coming days. Ahead of the cyclone, about 150,000 people were evacuated from low-lying areas in Maharashtra and Gujarat states. S.N. Pradhan, director of India's National Disaster Response Force, said social distancing norms were being followed in evacuation shelters and rescue teams were clearing debris from affected areas.

Both states, among the hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic, had scrambled disaster re-



A car stands damaged with a fallen tree after heavy rainfall in Mumbai India, Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

Associated Press

sponse teams, fearing the storm could endanger India's fight against the virus with supply lines cut, roads destroyed and lockdown measures slowing relief work.

Tropical cyclones are less common in the Arabian Sea than on India's east coast and usually form lat-

er in the year. Experts say changing climate patterns have caused them to become more intense, rather than more frequent.

In May 2020, nearly 100 people died when Cyclone Amphan, the most powerful storm to hit eastern India in more than a decade, ravaged the region. □

Spain, Morocco square off after 7,000 migrants arrive by sea

By **RENATA BRITO and ARITZ PARRA**

CEUTA, Spain (AP) — Spain deployed its military to the Moroccan border Tuesday as thousands of migrants jumped fences or swam onto European soil for the second day in a row after Rabat loosened border controls amid a deepening diplomatic spat.

Overwhelmed soldiers separated the adults from the young and carried children in their arms while Red Cross workers helped an endless trickle of migrants who were emerging from the water shivering and exhausted. One unconscious woman laid on the sand before she was carried away on a stretcher.

The sudden influx of migrants has fueled the diplomatic spat between Rabat and Madrid over the disputed Western Sahara region and created a humanitarian crisis for Ceuta, the Spanish city of 85,000 in North Africa on the Mediterranean Sea, separated from Morocco by a double-wide, 10-meter (32-feet) fence.

Amina Farkani, a 31-year-old Moroccan woman who commuted to jobs in Ceuta for 18 years until foreign workers were banned from entering last year when coronavirus outbreaks began to surge, said she saw an opportunity to go back to work when she heard that police were not controlling the border.

"They let people pass and stood there without speaking," Farkani told The Associated Press. "People just pass and pass and pass." Video cameras captured how some people rushed up the hills surrounding the city and jumped over the fences.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez canceled a trip to Paris, where he was to attend a summit on international aid to Africa, and flew by helicopter to Ceuta. While calling Morocco a "friend of Spain," Sánchez also urged authorities to "respect the shared border."

By Tuesday morning, more than 7,000 sea-soaked



A man is assisted by a soldier of the Spanish Army near the border of Morocco and Spain, at the Spanish enclave of Ceuta, on Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

people had crossed the border into the city since early Monday, the Spanish government said, including 1,500 thought to be teenagers. The number getting in slowed but didn't stop Tuesday even as Spain deployed additional police and soldiers.

At least 3,800 adults already have been returned to Morocco, according to Spain's Interior Ministry. Morocco and Spain signed an agreement three decades ago to expel all those who swim across the border.

Yet many arriving Tuesday were sub-Saharan Africans who often migrate to flee poverty or violence at home. Spain has agreements to return some of those migrants to their native countries, but not all of them.

One young man drowned and dozens were treated for hypothermia or small injuries, the Red Cross in Ceuta said, adding that it was performing coronavirus tests on the new arrivals. The adults were being transferred to Ceuta's main soccer stadium, while those thought to be minors were sent to warehouses run by charity groups.

By Tuesday afternoon, Moroccan authorities closed the road leading to the border post with Ceuta

and anti-riot police dispersed crowds of would-be migrants. Neither the government in Rabat nor local officials have commented about the mass influx or responded to queries by The Associated Press.

"It's such a strong invasion that we are not able to calculate the number of people that have entered," said Juan Jesús Vivas, the president of Ceuta, an autonomous city of about 20 square kilometers (7.7 square miles).

"The army is at the border in a deterrent role, but there are great quantities of people on the Moroccan side waiting to enter," he told Cadena SER radio. Four Spanish armored vehicles parked Tuesday at Tarajal beach in Ceuta, where the border fence leads to a short breakwater.

In a video shared by a Spanish police union urging authorities to send in reinforcements, anti-riot officers behind the border fence were using shields to protect themselves from stones being thrown by people in Morocco.

Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska denied local media reports saying that unaccompanied Moroccan migrants under 18, who are allowed to remain

legally under the tutelage of Spanish authorities, were being deported.

The European Union's top migration official — Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson — described the incidents as "worrying" and called on Morocco to prevent people from setting out in the first place.

"The most important thing now is that Morocco continues to commit to prevent irregular departures, and that those who do not have the right to stay are orderly and effectively returned," Johansson told the European Parliament.

"Spanish borders are European borders. The European Union wants to build a relationship with Morocco based on trust and shared commitments. Migration is a key element," she said.

Morocco's loosened border watch came after Spain decided to grant entry for medical treatment to the chief of a militant group that fights Morocco for the independence of Western Sahara. Morocco annexed the sprawling region on the west coast of Africa in 1975. Morocco's Foreign Ministry has said Madrid's move to assist Brahim Ghali, head of the Polisario Front, was "inconsistent with the spirit of partnership and good neighborliness" and vowed

there would be "consequences."

Vivas, Ceuta's conservative regional president, said residents were in a state of "anguish, concern and fear" and 60% of the city's children had not shown up for school on Tuesday. He also linked the sudden mass arrival to Spain's compassionate assistance to Ghali. The Spanish government itself, however, officially rejects the notion that Morocco is punishing Spain for a humanitarian move.

The prime minister appeared on live television to announce he would visit Ceuta and that his top priority was to ensure safety in the city "in the face of any challenge, any eventuality and under any circumstance."

Over the decades, Spain has built a close relationship with Morocco to crack down on illegal border crossings but also to increase economic exchanges and fight extremism. Sánchez on Tuesday avoided any direct criticism to Rabat in his speech. "To be effective," he said, "that cooperation must always be based on respect for the shared border."

Sánchez was also facing a political storm at home, with the far-right Vox party blaming the migration crisis on the government's "inaction" and sending its leader on a quick visit to Ceuta.

Many African migrants regard Ceuta and nearby Melilla, another Spanish territory, as a gateway into Europe. In 2020, 2,228 chose to cross into the two enclaves by sea or land, often risking injuries or death. On Tuesday, another 80 African migrants reached Melilla, 350 kilometers (218 miles) east of Ceuta, by jumping over the enclave's double fence.

Morocco scored a diplomatic victory last year when the previous U.S. administration under Donald Trump recognized Rabat's sovereignty over Western Sahara, paving the way for normalizing relations between Israel and Morocco. □

U.S. report: Allies of El Salvador's president deemed corrupt

MIAMI (AP) — Allies of Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele, including his Cabinet chief, have been included in a list of senior officials in Central America deemed corrupt by the U.S. State Department, according to a copy of a report obtained by The Associated Press.

The emergence of the list of purportedly five corrupt officials is likely to heighten tensions with Bukele, who is facing intense pressure from the Biden administration over the removal of several Supreme Court justices and El Salvador's attorney general. The U.S. has made strengthening democracy one of the pillars of its policy toward Central America, saying that rampant corruption is one of the root causes of illegal immigration.

A copy of the report, which was sent Monday to members of the U.S. Congress, was provided to The Associated Press by a Democrat staffer on the condition of anonymity because it has not been made public.

The list was originally included as a classified annex of a report sent to Congress in April in response to an appropriations request last year pushed by Rep. Norma Torres, a California Democrat who chairs the Central America caucus. That larger list contained the names of 12 Honduran and Guatemalan politicians accused of corruption or believed to have



In this Feb. 17, 2021, file photo, Salvadoran President Nayib Bukele speaks before the start of vaccination of medical staff with the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine at the Atlacatl Medical Unit of the Salvadoran Social Security Institute in San Salvador, El Salvador. Associated Press

ties to drug trafficking organizations.

The list of five Salvadoran officials deemed to have "engaged in significant acts of corruption" during their terms in offices was declassified May 4, according to the new report. Unlike the bulk of Guatemalans and Hondurans on the list, none of the Salvadorans have been indicted or sanctioned in the U.S. and their inclusion on the list would appear to have no immediate legal consequences.

It nonetheless is likely to further strain relations between the Biden administration and Bukele, who has shown no willingness to back away from his consol-

idation of power that has drawn condemnation from senior U.S. officials and lawmakers of both parties.

Bukele's fledgling New Ideas party swept February legislative elections by a landslide, taking control of the unicameral congress and immediately voting this month to remove the corruption-fighting top prosecutor and several high court magistrates who had blocked the president's agenda.

While Bukele remains wildly popular at home after decades of corrupt rule that followed the end of the country's bloody civil war, his critics in the U.S. say that in concentrating power he is undermining already

fragile institutions.

"El Salvador is a sovereign country and President Bukele was democratically elected. He makes his own decisions," Sen. Patrick Leahy, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said Monday in a lengthy statement. "But the choices he and his allies in the Salvadoran Congress make, that are eviscerating El Salvador's democratic civilian institutions and empowering the armed forces, have consequences for U.S.-Salvadoran relations."

The most prominent official on the list is Bukele's Cabinet chief, Carolina Recinos, who has worked alongside the president since his entry into politics as a small town

mayor for the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front created by leftist guerrillas following the end of the civil war. There were no details of Recinos' alleged wrongdoing.

Also named is Rogelio Rivas, who last month was replaced as minister of security and justice. The State Department said Rivas allegedly awarded his own construction company several noncompetitive, unadvertised contracts to build police stations and other buildings that fell under his official capacity and then inflated the cost of materials.

Also included is lawmaker Guillermo Gallegos, a founder of the GANA party that broke with El Salvador's bipartisan system to support Bukele's presidential run in 2019.

Two former FMLN lawmakers — Sigfrido Reyes and Jose Luis Merino, the latter a former vice minister of foreign relations in the FMLN government that preceded Bukele's administration — are also included. Fourteen members of the U.S. Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, wrote letters to the State and Treasury departments in 2017 requesting that Merino be investigated and sanctioned for ties to regional criminal groups.

El Salvador's presidential office didn't respond to a request for comment from Bukele and said Recinos was not available. □

Darwin's Arch loses its top due to erosion in Galapagos

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — The famed Darwin's Arch in the Galapagos Islands has lost its top, and officials are blaming natural erosion of the stone.

Ecuador's Environment Ministry reported the collapse on its Facebook page on Monday.

The rock structure — 43 meters (141 feet) high, 70 meters (230 feet) long and 23

meters (75 feet) wide — is less than 1 kilometer (about half a mile) from Darwin Island and it's a popular spot for scuba divers.

The unique flora and fauna on remote islands, some 1,000 kilometers (600 miles) off the coast of mainland Ecuador are famed in part for inspiring Charles Darwin's thoughts on evolution. □



This photo distributed by Galapagos National Park shows Darwin's Arch off the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, Sunday, May 16, 2021.

Associated Press



Make your stay on Aruba unique! Radisson Blu: trendy, fresh and new



PALM BEACH — There is a new kid in town, or rather: a new lady named Radisson Blu Aruba. Radisson Blu brand originates from Copenhagen, Denmark, where interior design and style live. The upper upscale hotel brand breathes the freshness of clean sheets, eases your mind with white and light wooded tones and pampers you with a luxury, trendy feel. This resort sets itself apart from the rest with huge, spacious rooms, impeccable service, a beach chic appearance and a superb location where everything you need is within walking distance. The buzzing nightlife of Palm Beach is around the corner, the stunning white-sanded beaches a stone throw away! With special opening rates this is your chance to try the lady in blue!

Fabulous facts

132 expansive suites, which feature free Wi-Fi, multiple bedrooms, a spacious living room and dining area, and a well-equipped kitchen. From 1.073 to 2.147 square feet you will have a perfect match for a family or two couples, or have all the space to yourself; it is entirely up to you. For sweeping vistas of Aruba's beaches, upgrade to a suite located on the top floors of the hotel. Blu's suites offer views of the ocean, island, or pool to inspire you while you relax.



Radisson Blu offers more than most standard rooms, you feel you are renting a condominium with the luxury services of a hotel. On your way to the suite the resort shows you already the attention to details: the elevator space is upgraded with corners of huge bamboo poles and trendy light bulbs incorporated in a wall of wooded decoration. The hallways are high and spacious taking you to the hip suite where the design is white with light wood to provide a luxury, contemporary ambiance. The suite's kitchen is fully equipped with an oven, dishwasher and kitchenware, a big family table ready to invite you to family breakfast or a friends gathering. You feel great, the white interior even accentuates the bright-

blue ocean in front of you: inhale this Zen moment from your spacious balcony.

Have a Sunset bite

A delightful breakfast, a scrumptious lunch or a delicious dinner are all possible at Sunset Bistro on the third floor. Here you will find a modern setting by the hotel's infinity pool with amazing ocean views. The chef and his team are clearly dedicated to making you come back presenting to you tasty tapas items or full entrée offerings. One thing has to be said: the hotel's staff makes a difference. Real smiles, real attention and real enthusiasm is what you encounter. Here we are experiencing something new and a new place has

new vibes, for you to discover. Go and find out why Sunset Bistro is the next hotspot for a bite, a drink or more.

Water wellness

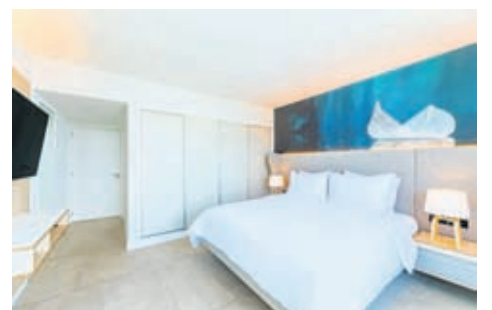
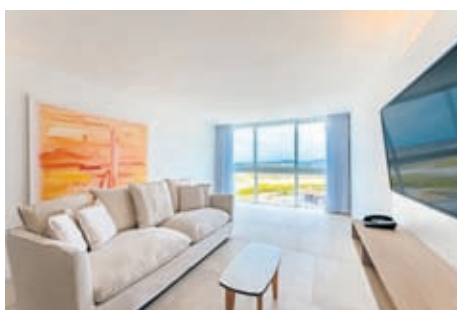
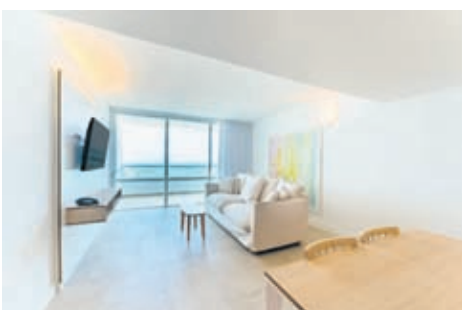
Imagine to wake up in your spacious, stylish suite and after some yawning and stretching you enjoy a cup of Joe on your balcony where your eye catches the huge pool below. This is very inviting and your body needs this as we all know that water makes us feel calm. The only worries you will have is to choose between the infinity pool right in front of Sunset Bistro or the big adult and children's pools centered between the suites and main hotel building. Cindy or one of her colleagues from the Acqua Breeze Pool Bar welcome you with a big smile and Caribbean flair.

That Blu thing

To say it all in a nutshell: this resort has a special something to it, you feel the difference in the attention, the design, the details and the space. To find out for yourself, you need to dive into the experience and most probably you will say like we do: it's a Blu thing. ☐

Radisson Blu Aruba

J.E. Irausquin Boulevard 97-A
Palm Beach, Aruba
Tel.: +297 526 000
Email: reservations@radissonbluaruba.com
Website: <https://www.radissonhotelsamericas.com/en-us/hotels/radisson-blu-aruba>



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MAGNET — Perfume, Jewelry & Cosmetics

Coming Soon: Shalom Hair & Nails Bar

Join the creative workshop's at Cosecha

SAN NICOLAS — Cosecha is a retail gallery that displays Aruban crafts, design and heritage inspired products, all handmade by local craftspeople. The end of this month Cosecha will be presenting different creative workshops. With these workshops the gallery would like to bring more creative activities to the public. You are most welcome to join!

Arts & Tapas night

Get in touch with your artistic side and learn new painting skills while eating tapas and sipping sangria. Arts & Tapas night takes place every Wednesday from 6:00 PM until 8:00 PM at Cosecha Oranjestad.



It includes paint materials, sangria and tapas.

Pelican Mosaic Workshop with Merveline Geerman

During this month's mosaic workshop we will be making the Pelican. Can't make it on the 28th? This workshop is also available as a Do It Yourself package.

Workshop:

Date: May 28th

Time: 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Age: 15+

Location: San Nicolas, B v/d Veen Zeppenfeldstraat 20

DIY Package:

Last day to order: May 28th

Pick up date: June 4th

Pick up location: Zoutmanstraat 1, Oranjestad

DIY At Home Bird House

AruFlamingo, the PVC design artists on the island, joins forces with Cosecha to bring a new DIY package onto the market. Use PVC and wood to assemble your bird house and finish it off by painting your own design. A perfect activity to do with your kids. Material: paint and brush is included. Adult supervision required to assemble the birdhouse with screws or nails.

DIY Package:

Last day to order: May 28th

Pick up date: June 4th

Pick up location: Zoutmanstraat 1, Oranjestad

Paint Your Belt Bag Workshop with Ana Luidens

Do you love small bags but love the freedom of having your hands



free? Then this is the workshop for you! In this workshop Ana Luidens will teach how to paint your own belt bag to make a fashion statement. All materials will be provided.

Date: May 29th

Time: 2:00 - 4:00pm

Age: 15+

Location: San Nicolas, B v/d Veen Zeppenfeldstraat 20

For more information send an email to cosechaworkshop@gmail.com or check out the Facebook page Aruba Cosecha. □

Honoring Goodwill Ambassadors at Barceló

PALM BEACH —Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The Goodwill Ambassador certificate is presented on behalf of the Government of Aruba to guests who visit Aruba 20 years and more consecutively.

This time, I was given the wonderful pleasure to honor couple Mr. Frank & Mrs. Melissa Maule, and couple Mr. Rick & Mrs. Sherry Fernandez from USA! It is incredibly beautiful to see that Aruba has so many

loyal visitors, and we ensure to always make them feel welcomed and appreciated whenever they visit us in Aruba.

This lovely group of people stated that they love the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, its peacefulness and beauty, our delicious Drinkwater, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom have become like family to them.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Barceló Aruba presented



the certificates to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked

them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-

away-from-home.

'Aruba DOET' does it again!

ORANJESTAD — Receiving over 1,000,000 tourists annually, Aruba has long been the most popular holiday hub in the Caribbean. Famous for its long beaches, colonial-style villages and ever-shining sun, Aruba remains the preferred destination for people from around the world. Although serving the island well financially, the tourist flux has a great environmental impact on the island and often oversees the lesser conditions of people living away from the beach resorts. Thus, the volunteer initiative Aruba DOET was created to unite the people from around the island and all over the world with the community. In 2020, this wonderful event will once again put the ONE back in our HAPPY ISLAND on Friday 28th and Saturday 29th of May.

The 'Aruba DOET' family

Aruba DOET was initiated by the Netherlands Oranje Fonds in 2013, along with its sibling islands in the Caribbean. In the following eight years, in cooperation with CEDE Aruba, it quickly grew to become the largest volunteer event on the island. At the mothering heart of the foundation, are numerous independent organizations and participating companies: We have seen banks paying their share by scheduling flexible hours for their employees, while hospitality venues service the community by providing meals and drinks. Large stock suppliers make sure no volunteer is left on the shelf by supplying free water and juice, while supermarkets offer their products at discount, keeping the cartwheels rolling. Waste containers are at our discounted disposal, garden companies have dug into our hearts by affordably renting out excavators, hardware stores give a huge amount of discount on their materials and thanks to transport services, Aruba DOET have enough busses available for their social projects.

What genuinely makes the event triumph are the thousands of volunteers that join the family each year. People from different ages and cultural backgrounds clasping their hands together to make a difference, is the epitome of what our happy island stands for. This is reflected by the thankful Aruban community on the receiving end, but never as much as the joy that is shared by the generous participants.

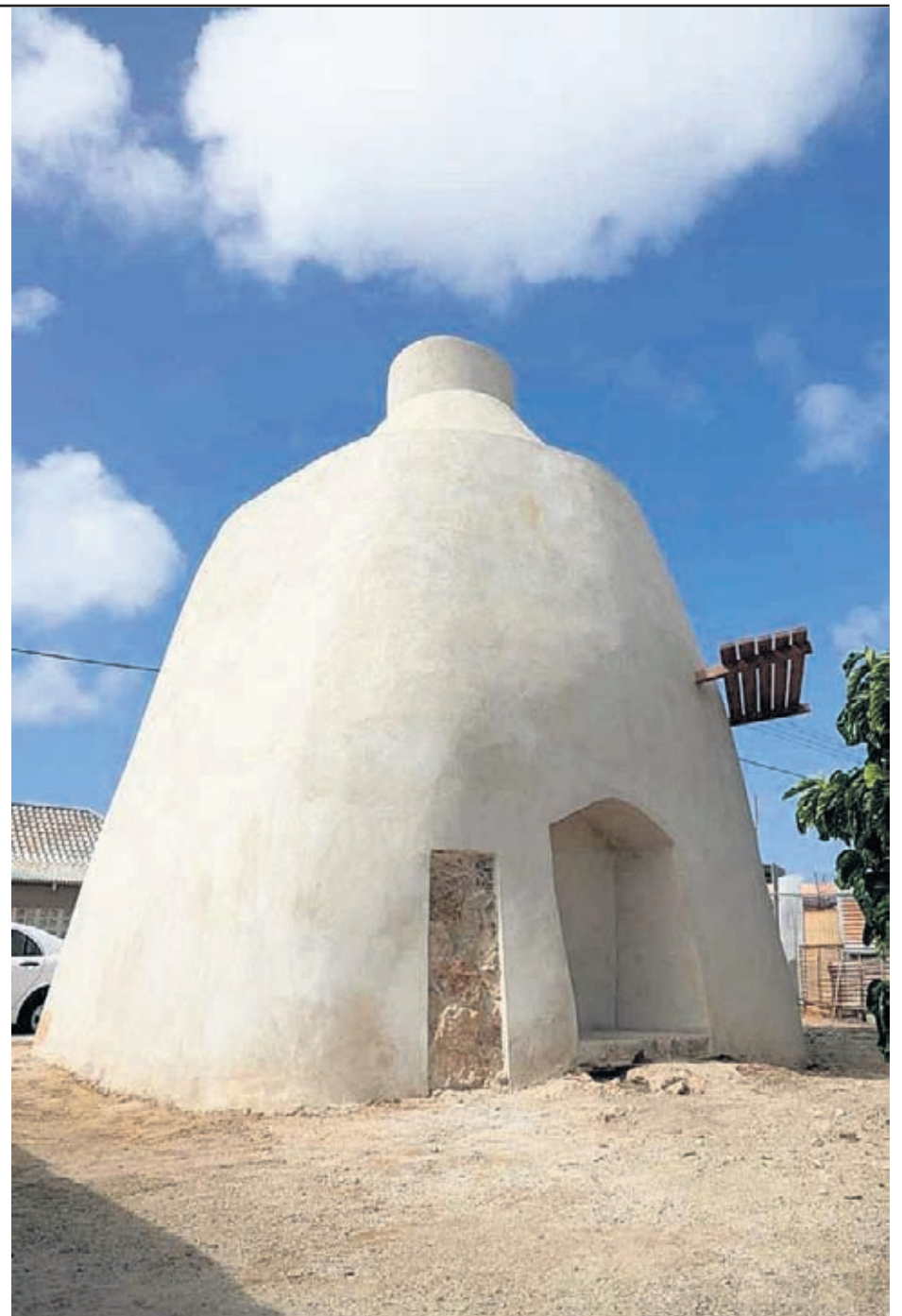
Make a difference

As a volunteer, you will not only



contribute to the community, but will also get the chance to participate in a project that brings people together. Holidaymakers and environmentalists, locals and entire families come together to make a difference. "This is my fifth year of participating in Aruba DOET, because it creates projects that puts a smile on the face of our children," says an Aruban contributor. A Dutch volunteer notes: "With Turtugaruba we cleaned up the beaches, in order for the sea turtles to safely enter land and lay their eggs. Thanks to the organization, sea turtles are now abundant on the beaches."

You also may join in on the fun! Visit www.arubadoet.com, choose from 194 projects, to find a job that best suits you and your schedule. The activities vary widely, from gardening for the hospital to brushing up a local church or even building an all-new education centre. Help a paw at an animal shelter, flip the meat on a barbecue for the hearing-impaired or stimulate youngsters to express themselves through art. There is a job for everyone, but if you find it impossible to choose much help is needed as a life-lining all-rounder.



Working for the greater good

With the past years in mind, Aruba has proven to care about its community like no other island in the Caribbean Sea. Volunteers are the heart and soul of community organizations.

Through CEDE Aruba and the Oranje Fonds, Aruba DOET emphasize how important actively engaged citizens are for the community as a whole.

Volunteer at Stichting Rancho

Stichting Rancho in Oranjestad will be doing some maintenance work around the Hanchi Awa & Rancho Plaza such as removing the grass, repainting the plants pots and cleaning the area. You will also have the opportunity to enter in the 'Forno di Kalki'. This will take place on the morning of Friday May 28, 2021 starting at 8.30 am. For more information please contact Ginelly at +297-5639388.

Thanks to the high-spirited volunteers and the generosity of all participating companies and organizations, every active year has painted the island with a fresh layer of triumph. In 2020, your help is needed to keep up the wonderful work and be part of an undertaking that will set an example for the Caribbean and the rest of the world. Being a part of Aruba DOET will give a positive impulse to the island and it gives a deeper insight into the island. On top of that, it will surely be an incredibly inspiring and fun day! Plus the participating organizations can reach their goals on that day, which they might not have been able to achieve without your help. □

Retailer results so far show people are going out, spending

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO

NEW YORK (AP) — At Walmart, sales of teeth whitener are popping as customers take their masks off. So are travel items. Macy's says that special occasion dressing like prom dresses are on the upswing as well as luggage, men's tailored clothing, and dressy sandals.

Shoppers, newly vaccinated, are emerging from their homes and going out again, and that, along with government stimulus payments, is helping to boost fiscal first-quarter results for major retailers Walmart and Macy's. They were among the first to release figures that covered the spring period. Walmart, the nation's largest retailer, boosted its annual earnings-per-share outlook, while Macy's surprisingly swung back into the profit column and it boosted its guidance for all of 2021.

"Our optimism is higher than it was at the beginning of the year," said Walmart CEO Doug McMillon. "In the U.S., customers clearly want to get out and shop." Jeff Gennette, CEO of Macy's, told analysts on the earnings call Tuesday that shoppers feel more emboldened to shop.

"Clearly our customer is ready to get on with life," Gennette said. "We don't see this as a short-term pop."

Home Depot, the nation's largest home improvement chain, also delivered stellar results on Tuesday, showing



In this Feb. 22, 2021 file photo, shoppers arrive at a Macy's in Charlotte, N.C. In this Feb. 22, 2021 file photo, shoppers arrive at a Macy's in Charlotte, N.C.

Associated Press

that an overcharged housing market continues to keep aisles full. The Atlanta-based company reported sales that blew past Wall Street expectations.

The overall strong results are a good omen for other major retailers who are slated to report their results in the next few days. During the height of the pandemic-induced lockdowns, Walmart and Home Depot were allowed to stay open, while non-essential retailers like Macy's were forced to temporarily close, dealing a devastating blow to business. That helped increase the dominance of big box chains.

Tuesday's results show that for now, Walmart and Home Depot are able to

keep sales strong even as the pandemic eases. Walmart served as a pandemic lifeline for shoppers loading up their pantry with groceries and basic household goods, while Home Depot benefited as shut-in shoppers continue to focus on making home improvements. Macy's solid comeback is encouraging news for other department stores and specialty chains, indicating that customers are ready to buy clothing, a business that was in the dumps.

Of course, retailers face plenty of challenges, particularly shortages of essential workers even as the unemployment rate remains high. Many companies are now having to offer more

perks or increase hourly wages. Shoppers could also pull back as costs of groceries go up. And Walmart and other discounters still face increasing competition from online juggernaut Amazon.

For now, traditional retailers' results are keeping investors optimistic.

At Walmart, sales at stores opened at least a year rose 6%, slowing from the 8.6% increase during the fiscal fourth quarter but better than last year's 10% spike. The company, based in Bentonville, Arkansas, also said that transactions in its stores were up for the first time in a year. Walmart's online sales rose 37%, down from 69% during the fourth quarter.

Walmart bumped up spending by \$14 billion to speed up its distribution network, and in February said it would raise its average hourly wage to more than \$15 per hour, a \$1 increase. Amazon and Target have already increased hourly wages to \$15 for all workers.

First-quarter net income slipped to \$2.73 billion, or 97 cents per share, in the three-month period ended April 30. Adjusted earnings totaled \$1.69 per share, topping the average analyst estimate of \$1.21 per share, according to FactSet.

Sales rose 2.6% to \$137.16 billion. Analysts were expecting \$132.16 billion.

Walmart said that it now expects earnings to increase in the high single digits; previously, the company had projected a slight decline in profit for the year.

Analysts believe that sign-ups are slowing for Walmart Plus, a membership program that costs \$98 annually, or \$12.95 per month. The retailer is hoping it will be a big competitor to Amazon's juggernaut Prime free shipping program. Walmart Plus gives members same-day delivery on 160,000 items, a fuel discount at certain gas stations and a chance to check out at Walmart stores without having to wait at a register.

However, McMillon told analysts that right now the focus is on the quality of that experience, not the quantity. □

Bank of America to raise minimum wage to \$25/hr by 2025

By KEN SWEET

NEW YORK (AP) — Bank of America plans to set the minimum wage for all positions at the company to \$25 an hour by 2025.

It would be the highest minimum wage paid by a big bank and could pressure rivals to follow suit. Wages have been rising at major banks in recent years amid pressure from outside groups to address wealth inequality.

The bank will also man-

date that vendors it does business with pay their employees at least \$15 an hour. The bank says 99% of its vendors are already in compliance at that level. Bank of America raised its minimum wage to \$15 an hour in 2017, to \$17 an hour in 2019, and to \$20 an hour last year, all under CEO Brian Moynihan.

The bank, based in Charlotte, North Carolina, has more than 210,000 employees.

Increasing the minimum wage across all industries has been a push by Democrats for several years. President Joe Biden campaigned on raising the Federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour from its current level of \$7.25. The proposal did not make it into the \$1.9 trillion economic relief package that passed earlier this year, but Democrats have pledged to push for a minimum wage increase in a bill later this year. □



In this Feb. 10, 2021 file photo, Bank of America signage is shown in Atlanta.

Associated Press

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 38 Visit
 - 1 Velocity briefly
 - 6 "Dragnet" 39 Garden org. item
 - 10 Words on a check 40 Plain silly
 - 11 Paris 41 Dispatched subway wood
 - 12 Dancer 42 Fragrant Castle

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Yesterday's answer

- DOWN**
- 1 Small 9 Happy 25 Endurance
 - 14 Pathfinder piano colleague 27 Informant
 - 15 Not perfection rewards 28 Pothead
 - 16 Sense of self 15 Charged problems
 - 17 Weed 4 Sicilian particle 30 Like
 - 18 Playfully 5 Fawn's seeker 31 Lone
 - 19 Persecutes 6 Camera together Star
 - 22 Must 7 Top floor court Stater
 - 23 Diving birds 8 Madrid 24 Patella 35 Circus
 - 26 Raging rivers 20 Got sight
 - 29 Back muscle, for short 21 Take to 36 Zilch
 - 32 Opposing vote protector 38 Shot
 - 33 Have lunch
 - 34 Response to a joke
 - 36 Nautilus captain
 - 37 Some die rolls

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5-19

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-19 CRYPTOQUOTE

E B J U H C I J X N G B C
E R K Z R Y G H E ' K K J U R K K B Y
D J Z X Z K A H X N J Y R K I R I X C G
H C G K Z H Y Z B P R Y H Q H X C .

— I B I A R N N R Y

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: DOCTORS SAY HAY FEVER CAN BE POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE. SOMETIMES THE EYES HAVE IT, AND SOMETIMES THE NOSE. — ANONYMOUS



In this Wednesday, Feb. 3, 2021, file photo, a passenger wears a face mask she travels on a flight from Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta.

Associated Press

EXPLAINER: Do I still have to wear a mask? What about kids?

By The Associated Press

The government's new guidance on masks for vaccinated people has left some Americans confused and sent businesses and states scrambling to adjust their rules. Target and CVS on Monday became the latest retailers to say vaccinated shoppers and workers don't have to wear masks in stores. New York said it will adopt the new mask advice this week, while California said it will wait a month.

About 123 million Americans — 37% of the population — are fully vaccinated against coronavirus, and more than 157 million, or 47%, have received at least one dose.

WHAT'S THE NEW ADVICE?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last week said people who are fully vaccinated no longer need to wear a mask indoors or outdoors and can stop social distancing in most places. Fully vaccinated means two weeks after the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, or two weeks after the one-dose Johnson & Johnson shot.

"If you are vaccinated, we are saying you are safe, you can take off your mask, and you are not at risk of severe disease or hospitalization from COVID-19," Dr. Rochelle Walensky, the CDC director, said on "Fox News Sunday." "If you are not vaccinated, you are not safe. Please go get vaccinated or continue to wear your mask."

ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS?

Yes. The CDC says everyone — vaccinated or unvaccinated — should continue to wear a mask in certain places. Masks are still required on public transportation — buses, trains and planes — and in other settings like hospitals, prisons and homeless shelters. Some states and businesses and stores are dropping their mask rules for fully vaccinated people because of the CDC change, while others are keeping them

in place. California is waiting until next month to give the public and businesses time to prepare.

WHY THE CHANGE?

The CDC director says there was new science in recent weeks that supported easing the advice on masks and social distancing. She said there was new evidence that COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world settings, are effective against virus variants and prevent the spread of the virus. In announcing the new advice, she also cited the drop in infections in the U.S., the wide availability of vaccines and the expansion to ages 12 and up for the shots.

"I want to be clear that we followed the science here," she said at a White House briefing.

WHAT ABOUT KIDS?

Children who haven't been vaccinated should still wear masks and keep 6 feet apart. The CDC recommends masks for children age 2 and older in public settings and when with people outside their household. Masks are also advised in schools. That won't change for the rest of this school year and "we'll be working on school guidance for the fall," Walensky said on Fox. Child care and camp guidance will also be updated, she said.

She noted that some children may not understand why they have to wear a mask if the rest of the family isn't. "I think that that's going to have to be a family by family decision," she said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

CAN I STILL WEAR A MASK ANYWAY?

Sure. Even though the guidance has changed, "there's no need for everybody to start ripping off their masks," Walensky said on NBC.

"Those behaviors are going to be really hard to change, and there is no mandate to take it off," she said. "What we're saying is, now this is safe." □

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Russia won't block Twitter, but partial slowdown to continue

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian authorities on Monday backed away from threats to block Twitter, saying that the social media platform deleted most of the banned content identified by Moscow and expressed "readiness and interest in building a constructive dialogue." Russia's state commu-

nications watchdog Roskomnadzor said it decided not to block Twitter in light of these developments, an announcement that seemingly ends the most recent standoff between the Russian government and the platform that has played a role in amplifying dissent in Russia. □

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The blockbuster movie makes a comeback this summer

By **LINDSEY BAHR**
AP Film Writer

After more than a year of benching its biggest spectacles, Hollywood is ready to dazzle again.

From "F9" and "In the Heights" to "The Suicide Squad" and "Black Widow," there will be a steady stream of blockbusters populating multiplexes for the first time since March 2020. For streaming-weary audiences, the promise of air conditioning, popcorn, soda fountains, 60-foot screens and state-of-the-art sound could be a welcome respite from the living room.

For beleaguered movie theaters, it's not a moment too soon.

The modern summer movie season, which runs from May through Labor Day, regularly accounts for over \$4 billion in revenue and makes up around 40% of the year's grosses. Last year, summer earnings were \$176 million, down 96% from 2019. Theaters have been gearing up for this moment and this summer will be an important gauge on whether habits have changed irrevocably during the pandemic.

In some ways, the calendar looks like a do-over of last summer. Many of the most anticipated releases were supposed to come out a year ago, including John Krasinski's "A Quiet Place



This combination photo shows poster art for upcoming summer films, top row from left, "A Quiet Place Part II," "Candyman," "The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It," "Cruella," "F9," "The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard," "In the Heights," bottom row from left, "Jungle Cruise," "Old," "Peter Rabbit 2: The Runaway," "Space Jam: A New Legacy," "Stillwater," "The Suicide Squad," and "Zola." (Top Row from left, Paramount Pictures/Universal Pictures/Warner Bros. Pictures/Disney/Universal Pictures/Lionsgate/Warner Bros., bottom row from left, Disney, Universal/Sony Pictures/Warner Bros./Focus Features/Warner Bros./A24 via AP)

Associated Press

Part II" (May 28), Lin-Manuel Miranda's Tony-winning "In the Heights" (June 11), the ninth "Fast & Furious" movie, "F9" (June 25), Marvel's "Black Widow" (July 9) starring Scarlett Johansson, the Emily Blunt and Dwayne Johnson action adventure "Jungle Cruise" (July 30) and the "Candyman" reboot (Aug. 27).

"In the Heights" director Jon M. Chu had to convince Miranda that it was worth it to wait for a theatrical release instead of pushing it out on a streaming platform last summer. The "Crazy Rich Asians" director knows the importance of a global release for a film led by an underrepresented group.

"We had big dreams for this," Chu said.

The "Fast & Furious" series has also been about creating a fun theatrical experience. "F9" not only brings back a fan favorite — Sung Kang's Han — it also sends cars into space.

"Whenever I get together with Vin (Diesel) and everybody to make these movies, we're not even talking about the plot ... but the feeling. I just remember as a kid in the summer saving enough money to go to the movies to share that experience with a bunch of strangers," said director Justin Lin. "When that moment hits and everyone's laughing or cheering together, it is magical."

Before the pandemic, summer moviegoing was a ritual. Now it's a wild card whether the promise of an "event film" will motivate audiences back to theaters, especially if something is also available to watch at home.

"Space Jam: A New Legacy" director Malcolm D. Lee called his film "The epitome of a popcorn movie." The sequel to the 1996 Michael Jordan pic has LeBron James sharing the screen with classic Looney Toons characters.

For a more R-rated adventure, "Guardians of the Galaxy" director James Gunn has this "misfit, Z-grade supervillains" of "The Suicide Squad." He had his pick of

DC characters and turned down Superman for Harley Quinn, Bloodsport and Peacemaker. Gunn looked to 1960s war capers like "The Dirty Dozen" for inspiration.

There are many other options too, including horror movies, like a third "Conjuring," documentaries about Anthony Bourdain and The Beatles, and family films, like "Peter Rabbit 2" (June 18) and the fourth "Hotel Transylvania" (July 23). Ryan Reynolds is in two action flicks, "The Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard" (June 16) and "Free Guy" (Aug. 13). There's even an epic Dev Patel-led take on a classic Arthurian legend, "The Green Knight" (July 30).

"I really I want audiences to get a chance to see it on the big screen," said "The Green Knight" director David Lowery. "It's a strange movie and I think that the idea of having that experience in a cinema with other people is going to be really, really exciting, especially after a year away from the big screen."

Some studios have been cautiously rolling out bigger films to decent results lately, like "Godzilla vs. Kong." But after seven weeks, even that is still shy of cracking the \$100 million mark domestically. In a normal summer, \$100 million might be an opening weekend for a tentpole. □

Disney Junior series aims to give a kid's eye view of race



This combination of photos shows Tariq Trotter, also known as Black Thought, at the 3rd Annual Diamond Ball in New York on Sept. 14, 2017, left, and Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson posing for a portrait in New York on Nov. 19, 2019.

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "Rise Up, Sing Out," an animated shorts series presenting the concepts of race, racism and social justice to young viewers, is coming to Disney Junior.

Designed for children ages 2 to 7 and their families, the series will include music by Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson and Tariq "Black Thought" Trotter of The Roots, who are executive producers with Latoya Raveneau.

"We hope these shorts will encourage the young audience to recognize and celebrate our differences

as human beings while learning the tools to navigate real-world issues of racial injustice," Thompson and Trotter said in a joint statement Tuesday.

They said their hope is to "empower and uplift the future generations in the way we know best, through music."

"Rise Up, Sing Out," produced in collaboration with Oscar-winning studio Lion Forge Animation ("Hair Love"), will debut this year on Disney Junior platforms including the channel and app. A date wasn't announced.

Disney Junior recognizes that children are "experiencing a multitude of feelings around what's happening in our world today" and that families are struggling to discuss "sensitive issues around race," said Joe D'Ambrosia, its general manager and a senior vice president.

The shorts are intended to give families "the tools and knowledge to address these important topics with their preschoolers in an age-appropriate manner through music and relatable kid experiences," he said in a statement. □

Veteran goalies getting their shot in Stanley Cup playoffs

By **AARON BEARD**
AP Sports Writer

For teams in the NHL play-offs Wednesday, there is comfort with having experience — particularly with a Vezina Trophy or a Stanley Cup winner — between the pipes.

Washington has the post-season's oldest goaltender with 39-year-old Craig Anderson, who has held his own against 2014 Vezina winner Tuukka Rask of Boston entering Game 3 of their first-round series. Edmonton hopes for the same from Mike Smith (also 39) entering its opener against Winnipeg's reigning Vezina winner, Connor Hellebuyck. There is also a Game 2 matchup of players who have been part of Cup-winning teams in Colorado's Philipp Grubauer (2018 with Washington) and Jordan Binnington (2019) of St. Louis.

"I think playoff hockey's a lot about experience," said Smith, who watched Anderson's Game 1 win against the Bruins. "You can't tell a young player what playoffs are like until they've actually witnessed it themselves. It's something that's unique to a veteran player and a player that's been in the playoffs a few



Boston Bruins left wing Taylor Hall (71) scores a goal past Washington Capitals goaltender Craig Anderson (31) during the third period of Game 2 of an NHL hockey Stanley Cup first-round playoff series Monday, May 17, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

times over the course of my career."

Anderson stopped 44 shots Monday in the Capitals' OT loss to the Bruins that evened their best-of-seven series. It was his first playoff start since 2017 and his third all season.

"As we get older, things become a little bit more difficult, so for Andy, he's a veteran player," Capitals coach Peter Laviolette said. "He's been around, and he's played a lot of

games. The one thing that you'd like is to have that rhythm of playing games all the time so that he can keep his rhythm in the net, and he wasn't afforded that luxury."

The Nashville-Carolina series is the outlier. The Hurricanes gave 25-year-old Alex Nedeljkovic his first playoff start in Monday's 5-2 win in Game 1 while fellow 26-year-old goalie Juuse Saros made his fifth career postseason start.

It's unclear if Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour will rotate goaltenders as he did last season to give Petr Mrazek a start after he missed significant time due to injuries.

"Yeah, Petr is our guy, but he's had a lot of time off," Brind'Amour said. "Not that I was questioning whether or not he could do it, it just gave Ned an opportunity this year. I just felt like he earned the start."

BLUES at AVALANCHE,

Colorado leads series 1-0 (10:30 p.m. ET, CNBC)

The status of St. Louis leading scorer David Perron is unclear for Game 2 after he missed Monday's 4-1 loss due to the league's COVID-19 protocols.

Regardless, the Blues need to slow Colorado's speedy top line.

The combination of captain Gabriel Landeskog, Nathan MacKinnon and Mikko Rantanen accounted for three goals, five assists, 16 shots and a fighting major, which was courtesy of Landeskog after he stood up for Rantanen following a big first-period hit. The Avalanche finished with a 50-23 edge in shots, breaking through for three third-period goals.

"It's not going to start going in because you start overpassing or looking for the perfect play," Landeskog said. "You've got to keep throwing pucks there."

JETS at OILERS, Game 1 (9 p.m. ET, NBC Sports Network) The NHL's leading scorer starts the playoffs as Connor McDavid and Edmonton open against Winnipeg. McDavid put up 105 points in 56 games and is "as motivated as you can be" going for the Stanley Cup. □

Joshua-Fury fight hits snag after Wilder ruling in U.S.

LONDON (AP) — The all-British fight between Anthony Joshua and Tyson Fury to become undisputed world heavyweight champion has hit a snag. Joshua's promoter, Eddie Hearn, on Tuesday confirmed reports an arbitrator in the United States has ruled that Fury is contractually bound to fulfil a third fight with Deontay Wilder. That throws into doubt the proposed Aug. 14 fight between Joshua, the WBA, IBF and WBO champion, and Fury, the WBC champion, that was expected to take place in Saudi Arabia.

Hearn said he has given Fury's team until the end of the week to come up with

a solution, or he'll turn to a "Plan B."

"We had a deal in place with Tyson Fury and we were told the arbitration wouldn't be an issue, that we could move on with this fight," Hearn said on Matchroom's social media channels. "They (Fury's promoters) were wrong and that's on them, that's their responsibility and their problem. We hope they can solve that problem, but we have to look after ourselves and Anthony Joshua."

"We have to maintain the position of unified world champion, and those talks will continue and we want to be in a position by the end of this week to know

are we fighting Tyson Fury or are we moving forward with another option."

Hearn said Joshua could instead fight the mandatory challenger for the WBO belt, undefeated Ukrainian Oleksandr Usyk. "I had been focusing on Plan A. The only fight was Fury and we hope it can still take place," Hearn said. "The game changed — we have to have a Plan B in place, and probably a Plan C. We have different options. The one that springs to mind is Usyk."

Fury and Wilder fought a split decision draw in December 2018, before Fury won their second fight by seventh-round stoppage last February.



Tyson Fury hits a right hand to Deontay Wilder during the WBC heavyweight title fight in Las Vegas on February 22, 2020.

Associated Press

Fury moved on from plans for a potential third fight with Wilder, which were complicated by an injury to the American and an absence of available tele-

vision dates.

Fury announced the date and location of the fight with Joshua in a video on his Twitter account on Sunday. □

Knee still hurting, Koepka can walk but not run at PGA

By BEN NUCKOLS

AP Sports Writer

KIAWAH ISLAND, S.C. (AP)

— Brooks Koepka's preparation for the PGA Championship included playing the AT&T Byron Nelson last week in Texas — just to see if he could walk 18 holes without pain in his surgically repaired right knee.

He missed the cut, but the walking wasn't a problem. Playing to the standard of a four-time major champion while doing 2 1/2 hours of rehab a day might be tougher.

"Every day's been a long day," Koepka said Tuesday. Koepka is two months removed from surgery to repair a dislocated kneecap and ligament damage. He's in better shape than he was at the Masters, where he hobbled his way to a missed cut while struggling to bend his knee enough to read putts or retrieve the ball from the cup. But he's hardly at full strength.

"I can't run. I'm not where I want to be. But at the same time, it's what I've got to deal with, so just move on," Koepka said. "I still have days where it sucks, when my knee just doesn't feel good waking up and it's not going to feel good all



Brooks Koepka putts on the 12th hole during a practice round at the PGA Championship golf tournament on the Ocean Course Tuesday, May 18, 2021, in Kiawah Island, S.C.

Associated Press

day, but those are getting less and less."

Koepka won his most recent major and second PGA two years ago at Bethpage Black. At the time, he had also won back-to-back U.S. Opens, and he swaggered into brawny Bethpage with a confidence bordering on arrogance, saying majors were "the easiest" tournaments to win because he only had to worry about

a small portion of the field beating him.

Since then, injuries have taken big chunks out of his schedule and robbed him of opportunities to be competitive even when he has played.

"I mean, I can play. You're never 100%, that's the thing. For two straight years it's been left knee, right knee, herniated a disk in my neck," he said. "I can deal

with the pain. That's not an issue. It's just a matter of being able to hit the shots that I want to hit and do things I want to do, and I'm starting to be able to do that. Even though I'm not 100%, I can still hit the shots."

Koepka gave himself a chance at a third consecutive PGA Championship last year at Harding Park before fading with a final-round 74. He skipped

the FedEx Cup playoffs but managed a tie for seventh at the Masters.

Since then he has five missed cuts in eight starts. He also has a victory and a tie for second, although those came before the surgery.

His doctors tell him he won't be fully healthy for six more months, although Koepka believes he can improve upon that timeline. For now, the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island at least presents a more manageable challenge than hilly Augusta National.

"I feel like I can hit every shot. It's not like Augusta where I'm trying to figure out what's the best line to walk," he said. "Now I can actually hit golf shots and understand what's going on."

Most of the time, anyway. In about one out of every 20 swings with the driver, he tries to push off his right leg only to discover he can't do it. No wonder all but one question he got at his pretournament news conference was injury-related. The only reprieve was a query about the tough par-3 17th hole.

"I haven't played it yet," Koepka said. □

Federer loses comeback match to Andujar at Geneva Open



Roger Federer of Switzerland returns a ball to Pablo Andujar of Spain during their men's second round match, at the ATP 250 Geneva Open tournament in Geneva, Switzerland, Tuesday, May 18, 2021.

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — Roger Federer lost his comeback match after two months away from tour on Tuesday, falling to Pablo Andujar 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 in the second round of the Geneva Open.

His first match on clay in almost two years kept him on court for almost two hours in only his second tournament since the 2020 Australian Open. The past 15 months have included two

surgeries on his right knee. "It (losing) never feels great," Federer said. "Looking at the long road that I have been on from the comeback, sure it's rewarding to be back on a tennis court but you know I expect better from myself."

In the decisive set, the top-seeded Federer forced a service break before Andujar rallied. Federer saved two match points on his own serve, but the third ended with a wayward forehand under pressure on the baseline.

Acknowledging he had not deserved victory at the end, Federer said "there was just not enough happening in my game."

"I was a bit limited today, I felt, on the court. It is what it is. You just have to accept

it and move on," he said. Next is the French Open, site of Federer's most-recent match on clay — a 2019 semifinals loss to Rafael Nadal — before Tuesday's defeat.

"Roland Garros is not the goal," said Federer, an eight-time Wimbledon champion who lost an epic final there in 2019 to Novak Djokovic. "The goal is the grass so I still have time."

The 39-year-old Federer and 35-year-old Andujar were facing each other on tour for the first time, and the Spaniard said Monday he wanted to be able to tell his grandchildren he had played the Swiss great. Andujar put his hands to his head after clinching victory and exchanged an almost apologetic smile with Fe-

derer at the net.

Before going on court, Federer was a spectator for part of the ATP Tour debut of perhaps the best prospect in Swiss men's tennis since his own rise in the 1990s.

With Federer watching some of the match, 18-year-old Dominic Stephan Stricker beat former U.S. Open champion Marin Cilic 7-6 (5), 6-1 in the first round.

Stricker, last year's French Open junior champion, is ranked 419th. Cilic, who won his only Grand Slam singles title in 2014, is ranked 46th.

The Swiss left-hander had nine aces and no double-faults. He broke Cilic's serve four times and was broken only twice. □